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LETTER DATED 25 JANUARY 1991 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to enclose herewith the text of the statement by the Government of Malaysia on the situation in the Gulf.

I should be grateful if this statement could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ismail RAZALI
Ambassador

Annex

Statement dated 25 January 1991 by the Government of Malaysia

Malaysia is increasingly concerned over developments relating to the war being waged in the Gulf. All indications point to a protracted conflict and given the massive and incessant bombing that is being carried out there will be immense destruction, suffering and loss of lives in Iraq and in the areas involved.

Malaysia is troubled that the rapid escalation of the war will take it beyond the original objectives as contained in the relevant Security Council resolutions. Resolution 678 (1990) does not empower actions that would lead to the virtual destruction of Iraq. Malaysia is disturbed that the Security Council and the United Nations have been ignored ever since military action was initiated. Efforts to have the Council consider various aspects of the war are being blocked. It is to be underlined that Malaysia's support for resolution 678 (1990) and other relevant resolutions to bring about the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait was in the context of a continuing central role of the United Nations. Countries concerned cannot assume to draw a blank cheque from the Security Council resolution to wage total war on Iraq. Malaysia would like to see greater accountability of the actions by participating forces, not only to the Council but also to the general membership of the United Nations. The concerns being expressed by many members of the United Nations, especially members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, over the conduct of the war and fears of a widening of the conflict should be taken up immediately by the Council.

The possibility of an extended conflict raises the spectre of a general instability and turmoil internationally that will weaken important international structures and affect the role of the United Nations as a vehicle for conflict management and resolution. An extended conflict and a widening of the war may result in a continuing presence of outside military Powers in the area. Additionally the conflict will also lead to depletion of resources and funds for much-needed development assistance.

Malaysia is further concerned that the war may lead to the neglect of other important issues, such as the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land and their oppression. This would be a grave injustice. The war must not in any way bring about the eclipse of the Palestinian issue. Israel can be expected to exploit the war situation to marginalize the Palestinian issue while extorting military and financial aid from countries sympathetic to it. The United States and the allied coalition would be committing a serious injustice if they allow themselves to be persuaded.

Malaysia calls for a reassertion of a United Nations central role in the crisis. Malaysia would support any move within the Security Council or any other forums such as the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries to employ initiatives to bring the war to the earliest possible peaceful conclusion and to have Iraq withdraw from Kuwait.